

HABS No. AZ-145-A

Phoenix Indian School, Dining Hall (Auditorium)
Northeast Corner of Central Avenue and Indian School Rd.
Phoenix
Maricopa County
Arizona

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Western Region
Department of the Interior
San Francisco, California 94107

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

PHOENIX INDIAN SCHOOL, DINING HALL (Auditorium) HABS NO.: AZ-145-A

Location: Northeast Corner of Central Avenue and Indian School Road
Phoenix
Maricopa County
Arizona

USGS Phoenix 1952/Sunyslope 1965 Quadrangles
War Memorial UTM Coordinates: 12. 400710. 3706720

Present Owner: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service,
P.O.Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

Present Occupant: Unoccupied.

Present Use: None.

Statement of Significance: The Dining Hall is the oldest surviving major structure on the site of the Phoenix Indian School. In addition, not only was it the first structure at the School to employ Mission Revival style, it was also the first to do so in Phoenix, and in Arizona; it may well have been the first permanent institutional building in the U.S. in that style, which gave it unusual importance for architectural history. At the same time the stylistic choice was ideologically poignant, recalling on one hand the early history of European colonization in the West, and on the other pointing up the new "mission" embodied in the Indian School itself.

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PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History.

1. Date of Erection: 1901.
2. Architect/Builder: Architect not known, but designed in the office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D.C.; builder not known.
3. Original and Subsequent Owners: U.S. Department of the Interior.
4. Alterations and additions: Within two years after its completion, a major addition to the north, consisting of a doubling of the length of the original space and the addition of a kitchen and bakery, altered the function of the building from auditorium to dining hall. Subsequent additions, one to the east, two to the west and the rest to the north side of the building, were all related to expansion of the dining hall function. Apart from the painting of the exterior and some minor detail and surface changes internally, the south part of the building stood in 1990 in something like the condition of 1904.

B. Historical Context.

The Dining Hall was designed in 1901 and construction finished in December of the same year. As several references made clear, and as the surviving drawings indicated, the building was designed to be an auditorium, and served that function in 1902 and 1903 (Pierson; 1901, 1903 Drawings). The School was at that time in an expansionist phase, and clearly the need for a large dining hall outweighed the need for an auditorium to the extent that the additions to the original structure of kitchen and bakery facilities were designed in late 1903, and the work of conversion completed by the middle of 1904.

"Few educational institutions in the country can boast a finer dining hall than the one where the students at the government school eat. ... The ample floor space affords comfortable accommodation for more than seven hundred persons. It is one hundred and five feet long and seventy feet wide, with a ceiling about twenty-five feet high, and is equipped with steam radiators for comfort in cold weather. It is brilliantly lighted by electricity, the bulbs being arranged artistically through the ceiling and at the sides of the hall." (Pierson, p. 29, quoting from the Native American).

Although the designation "Auditorium" would have been technically correct as reflecting the original function, for eighty-six of its eighty-eight years the building was used and known as the Dining Hall, and was so designated in this report. The building was sited at the end of the west entrance to the School from Indian School Road to the south, with its principal face to the south. The entrance was in the form of a dual carriageway with a central planted divider, terminating in front of the Dining Hall in an elliptical basin (the Lagoon). Many of the other buildings on the site at the time were aligned on either side of the carriageway, providing a roughly symmetrical frame to the facade of the Dining Hall, itself also roughly symmetrical. The intended effect, no longer visible, must have been very

impressive, especially so in early twentieth-century Arizona, where large scale architectural compositions were virtually unknown.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement.

The Dining Hall was originally a rectangular block, the main axis running north-south, with a twin-towered facade to the south; the towers, of unequal height and some differences in detail, flanked a scrolled gable end. Behind the principal facade the building displayed a wider, higher central volume with a pitched roof, flanked to east and west by lower, narrower volumes with shed roofs, terminating at the north end in hipped roofs over the stage house and wings.

1. Architectural Character. The Dining Hall was in most of its dispositions in the California Mission or Mission Revival style. As a very early example of the application of that style to an institutional function, it was not as historically correct as later examples in the same style. To begin with, the building was executed entirely in local red brick, and retained that exterior appearance for some time; later Mission Revival buildings were invariably stuccoed externally, and painted either white or cream. Again, the towers of the south facade were placed symmetrically about the central axis of the building, but were not of the same height nor, above the first story line, detailed in the same way. In addition, the incurving batter at the base of each tower and the shingled belfry atop the east tower suggest the influence of the Craftsman mode. Such eclecticism in the application of details did not detract however from the general quality of the composition; it might even be said to have imparted a certain liveliness not always found in more scholarly examples of Mission Revival.

2. Condition of fabric. Good, with signs of wear at some points.

B. Description.

Exterior.

The Dining Hall was built first as an auditorium, a rectangular block 70'-8" wide (east-west) x 78'-2" deep (north-south), with a tower at the southeast corner projecting 12" to the east and 8'-1" to the south and another tower at the southwest corner projecting similarly to west and south. From the north wall a shallow projection to the north, 21" deep x 37'-6" wide, marking the rear wall of the stage house.

On the south (principal) face, in the center, at the lower level, a blank wall with a long horizontal panel with stuccoed surface, framed all round with three lines of stretchers (the bricks laid vertically at either end), the whole frame projecting 1" from the wall surface; below, in front of the south face, at ground level, a brick planter box with cement coping. At the upper level, a row of 5 round-headed windows rising from a corbelled string course, separated by piers with the spring line of the row of arches marked by corbels; all windows wood-framed, double hung, 1 over 1. Terminating the south face a medium slope Mission style gable, with rounded crown joined by three steps to inverted cyma recta profile left and

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right, the gable topped with a cement coping; within the gable frame a square opening, each side of the square extended in a shallow segmental curve, the central square panel glazed with 16 small panes.

On the south face, to the east end, a tower with the first story a cubical block, the sides battered inwards from the base with a very slightly curved profile, the curve terminating 192" above the top of the foundation wall, with a round arched opening in the south face, the spring line of the arch at 78" above top of foundation, indicated by corbelled impost, arch above with shaped voussoirs, elongated keystone at crown, framing of arch laid in a vertical plane so that it projected progressively further from battered wall surface from bottom to top. In front of tower, to the south, at ground level a concrete platform with 2 steps, extended beyond the opening 2' to the east and all the way to the planter box on the west. On the east face, at the same height as the opening on the south, an arched opening for a window, detailed as the south opening, but bricked in with four archivols of headers, stretchers below. The west and north faces of the tower at the first story all blank. The opening on the south face gave onto a small square vestibule within the base of the tower, divided on the centerline (east-west) by 2 pairs of panelled wood doors, in wood frames, with a transom above of 4 fixed panes, 2 to each pair of doors. The outer (south) half of the vestibule space plain brick internally, with a plaster ceiling above. The inner (north) half of the vestibule space had wainscoting of 3 1/4" vertical t & g boarding, with a molded cap at top, 59 1/2" high, brick walls plastered above, plaster ceiling. The second story of the tower consisted of a cubical block with a square panel in the south face, recessed 3", 2 courses receding in 1" steps at bottom of recess, 6 dentils in brick with 1" projection of 2 courses at top of recess. Recessed panel had 2 narrow vertical unglazed openings, each 9" wide and 9 courses high, 2 courses stepping back at sill, to upper left and lower right. The second story was terminated on all sides by a projecting timber cornice at a height of 5 courses above the top of the recessed panel and 5 courses above the top of the coping of the east end of the central gable. The second story of the east face of the east tower identical to the south face, but with only 1 opening, upper left. The second story of the north face of the east tower identical to the south face, but with only 1 opening, upper right. The second story of the west face of the east tower all blank. The third story consisted of a very low wooden belfry with a low pyramidal roof overhanging on all sides and terminated by a finial and a small flagpole. All 4 corners below the roof battered in and sheathed with wood shingles; between the closed corners on each side a low unglazed opening, with a short 8" x 8" wood post revealed to left and right. The roof soffit was sheathed with t & g boarding, with shingles on the upper surface.

On the south face, to the west end, a tower with its first story identical to the east tower, with opening to the south, blank window to the west, and north and east faces all blank. The second story consisted of an elongated cubical block with, on its south face, a recessed panel in the center detailed as on the east tower. The recessed panel had 3 narrow vertical unglazed openings, each 9" wide, 2 courses stepping back at sill, all 3 openings in a line from upper right to lower left, the center opening 9 courses high, the others 8 courses high apiece. The second story was terminated on all sides by a projecting timber cornice, at a height of 3 courses above the top of the recessed panel and 12 courses above the top of the gable at the center of the south face. The second story of the west face of the west tower identical to the south face, but the vertical opening to lower left was 9 courses high. The second story of the north face of the west tower identical to the south face, but with vertical openings on a line from upper left to lower right. The second story of the east face of the west tower all blank. The third story consisted of a low attic or belfry with, on the south

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face, 2 round headed openings at the center, each opening filled with 13 wood louvers, the whole terminated by a projecting sloping roof of timber, supported at either end by a pair of large wood brackets in Italianate style, covered above with wood shingles. Surmounting the whole was a brick parapet with an undulant Mission style profile. The west, north and east faces of the third story identical to the south face.

The west face of the building behind the southwest tower had at first story level a row of 4 semicircular brick arches, containing wood-framed windows, each divided in 3 with a bottom-hinged, outward opening hopper in the center, fixed panes left and right, illuminating the aisle space of the auditorium. At the north end a pair of wood-panelled doors, with a semicircular transom above, bricked in, a flight of 2 steps below. Again to the north, another arch, bricked in except for a small transom above a single wood-panelled door, with beyond that a final arch, bricked in except for a small semicircular window. The main space of the auditorium was illuminated by a row of 4 semicircular wood-framed windows, aligned with those in the aisle wall below, the outer two with 2 quadrant bottom-hinged hoppers, the inner two fixed, each quadrant glazed with 8 panes of tinted cathedral glass. Contiguous to the auditorium on the north was the stage house, the stage at the center covered by a hipped roof with its peak at the ridge line of the auditorium roof, and with a single semicircular window below, to the west; the stage wing to the west covered by a hipped roof continued from the roof of the aisle space. The east face behind the southeast tower was originally identical to the west face. The north face was brick, with a single door at the center of the wall at the back of the stage giving access to a wood stair with 8 risers.

Interior.

The interior consisted originally of a central volume (nave), 2 stories high, illuminated by clearstory windows, and flanked to left and right by lower spaces (aisles) illuminated by their own windows. The interior was entered from the two vestibules on the south in the bases of the east and west towers; doors were also provided at the north ends of the east and west walls. At the north end of the interior there was a stage wall with an opening in the center somewhat narrower than the nave width, framed to left, right and above by a coved recess in plaster, the raked stage below projecting into the auditorium space some 3' beyond the side walls. In the southeast corner of the west wing of the stage house was a chimney, apparently for a heating unit. The interior walls at first floor level were provided with timber wainscoting below as in the entrance vestibules, plaster above; the clerestory walls were plastered. The floor was timber throughout, and the ceilings were plastered, the ceiling of the nave volume having a horizontal section in the center with two opening vents in it, flanked on all sides by a sloping section; the aisle ceilings were similarly horizontal where they abutted the main volume and with the outer half sloping down to the outer wall in each case.

Construction.

All exterior walls and the two towers (excluding the belfry of the southeast tower, which was all timber), were of locally made sandstock brick, medium red in color, 8" x 4" x 2 3/4" high, rising upon foundations of stone, consisting of horizontal courses of roughly shaped, flattish blocks of greyish-yellow schist with small mica flecks up to grade, above grade a band of roughly squared, quarry-faced grey basalt blocks laid in a single course below the south face and beneath the west half of the east tower and beneath the east half of

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west tower; the outer halves of the foundations of the two towers and of the east and west walls of the building were topped with these blocks laid in 2 courses, both the single course and the 2 course applications averaging 15" in height. All doors and windows were wood, in wood frames, the cornices, brackets and roof members of the towers were also all wood. All of the interior construction was of wood, including the floor, the clerestory walls, and the roof construction. The roof over the central volume was carried by scissors trusses with horizontal tie beams some 2' above the tops of the trusses of the clerestory walls. Interior surfaces above the wooden wainscoting were all plaster, ceilings included. The roofs were sheathed with wood shingles, as were the exterior surfaces of the clerestory and there was a galvanized iron monitor at the ridge extending from a point 20' north of the south face to the north end of the ridge.

Additions and Alterations.

As noted above, the original building was intended to be an auditorium, but by 1904 it had been converted into the School Dining Hall, which function it retained up to 1990. The first program of additions and alterations involved the demolition of the stage house and wings at the north end of the original building, and the construction of a new north wall 27' north of the original north wall position. At either side of the original stage opening the footings were rebuilt to support a 9" dia. timber post in each position, in order to carry the north ends of the timber trusses that formed the clearstory walls and carried the main roof above, and permit extension of the trusses to the new north wall. The walls and roofs of the aisles to east and west were extended similarly to the north, where the new north wall was raised above the roof line in a gable imitative of the south face and continued in sloping parapets above the aisle roofs on either side, and with all other external detailing matching the original. On the interior the new extension was illuminated by 4 windows in the clearstory and 4 more in the aisle wall on each side, the new windows and all other exterior details of the extension matching the original. The new north wall was provided with a total of 5 openings, a single wood-panelled door at the end of the west aisle and in the nave 2 wood-panelled doors in the east half of the wall and a single wood-panelled door and a pass-through in the west half.

To the north of the new north wall a kitchen was built, with its own north wall 25'-1" to the north of the new north wall of the Dining Hall. It was a rectangle, 47'-7" east-west, with a small extension at its southwest corner, 8'-9" north-south x 6'-3" east-west, the west wall of the small extension coplanar with the west wall of the Dining Hall proper. A large chimney was built near the center of the north wall of the kitchen for the cooking ovens. The kitchen had a flat ceiling with a slightly pitched tin roof above, and a projecting skylight near the center, glazed above and with louvered vents in its sides. To the north of the Kitchen, two further extensions, the first 23' north-south, the second 29'3" north-south, both 22' wide east-west, for the Bakery. Along the west face of Kitchen and Bakery a screened porch with shed roof, and on the east side, in the angle between Bakery and Kitchen, a screened porch with shed roof, 23' north-south. The roof over the Bakery pitched east and west and covered with shingles, a projecting skylight at the ridge over the south extension.

In the brickwork of the bottom stories of the two towers there are inscribed numerous graffiti. These were mostly obscured when the exterior of the building was covered at some later date with at least 2 layers of pinkish-buff paint.

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Discrepancies.

Even at the earliest stage of its existence, there were discrepancies between the building as designed (1901 Drawings) and as built. For example, evidence that the planter box in front of the south face and the concrete platforms to either side were built as shown on the drawings was inconclusive; an indistinct outline appeared on the site plan (1910) but not thereafter. The west face of the east tower was designed with a recessed panel at the second story; by implication the same detail would have been intended for the east face of the west tower; the recessed panel was omitted in each case. The window in the south gable was designed with 16 small panes (1901 Drawings); as built, there were 25 panes (1940 Photograph). The expanded interior space of 1904 had 1 timber column supporting the clerestory wall on each side (1903 Drawings); as built, there were 2 columns on each side.

The ceilings of the interior were shown as plaster (1901, 1903 Drawings), but no evidence was seen to prove that plaster was applied there; the pressed metal ceilings in place in 1990 could have been installed from the first. The outer surface of the clearstory wall was intended to be sheathed with wood shingles; vertical boarding could have been used instead at the time of construction, and also on the interior surface, which was indicated as plaster on the drawings. Decisions made in the field could have supplanted the indications given by the working drawings in those and other details, or the changes could have occurred at some later date. The evidence did not seem to exist that would permit conclusions either way in any of those cases.

Later Additions.

In 1926 there were some additions and remodeling (Pierson, p.91); there is no evidence of what form the changes took. In 1932 the existing Kitchen and Bakery and subsequent additions were demolished. In their place a new Kitchen and Bakery were constructed (Pierson, p.133; 1932 Drawings). The new Kitchen was 48' north-south and to its north wall was attached the new Bakery, 50' north-south, the two having the same width, 42'6" east-west, with their west wall coplanar with the west wall of the Dining Hall. The roof pitched east and west at the same slope as the roof of the Dining Hall to the south, and terminated against a new north wall rising as a parapet above the roof outline. At the ridge there was a continuous lantern, illuminating the interior through 8 large windows either side, the lantern reflected in a raised outline at the top of the north wall. Against the east side of the new Kitchen, 5 smaller rooms against the north wall of the Dining Hall, for Pantry, Stores, Dressing, Milk, Meat; and contiguous to the north a Meat and Vegetable Preparation area, the whole covered by a shed roof of low pitch.

By 1935 there was an extension for a Dishwashing room, 30' north-south x 26" east-west, against the west wall of the Dining Hall (1938 [1935] Site Plan), covered with a pitched roof terminating in a stepped gable to the west.

By 1944 the original east wall of the Dining Hall had been removed to provide an extension of the Dining Hall space to the east, 21'5" wide east-west and the full length of the Dining Hall north to south, with a Cold Storage room, 25' north-south x 22' east-west, attached to the north. The south wall of the east extension was raised above the roof line in a parapet with a scrolled profile of low pitch.

In 1968 a Boiler Room was added to the west side of the building (1968 Drawings). It was

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a rectangle 19'9" north-south x 10' east-west, covered with a shed roof of low pitch.

At unknown dates the original entrance doors in the bases of the east and west towers were replaced with solid steel doors, and the glazed transoms above were closed in with brickwork in a basketweave pattern. The roof was covered with asbestos shingles. In the Dining Hall, the timber floor was covered with sheet linoleum; some of the windows on the west side were painted over or covered; a large serving counter was installed at the north end; air handling units were installed, as were new light fixtures; and new food service fixtures were installed in the Kitchen (1975 Drawings).

Sources: See Source List in Phoenix Indian School Report, HABS NO.: AZ-145. Drawings located: 1901 (for the Auditorium); 1903 (for the Dining Hall); 1932, 1968, 1975 (for the later additions).

Project information: This project was undertaken according to the terms of Subagreement No. 2 to Cooperative Agreement No. CA-8000-9-8005 between United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service and the Arizona Board of Regents for and on behalf of Arizona State University. This project was carried out prior to the transfer of the property from Federal ownership, and the property was documented as part of the 1988 Memorandum of Agreement among the Department of the Interior, Arizona SHPO, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

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